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Planning

PRJ2144 Access to Palliative and End-of-Life Care Medicines Through Community Pharmacies in North East London - Market Engagement

NHS North East London Integrated Care Board

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-005469

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-04e2f8

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Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

NHS North East London Integrated Care Board

4th Floor - Unex Tower, 5 Station Street

LONDON

E15 1DA

Email

hub.queries@nhs.net

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UKI41 - Hackney and Newham

NHS Organisation Data Service

QMF

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://northeastlondon.icb.nhs.uk/>

I.3) Communication

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Body governed by public law

I.5) Main activity

Health

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

PRJ2144 Access to Palliative and End-of-Life Care Medicines Through Community Pharmacies in North East London - Market Engagement

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 85149000 - Pharmacy services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

North East London Integrated Care Board (NEL ICB) are seeking to commission Service

Providers within NEL to provide access to palliative end-of-life care (PEoLC) medicines to patients in the community in North East London.

The main service outcome will be to facilitate easy and timely access to PEoLC medicines, enabling patients to achieve good symptom control.

It is expected that the service provider will:

- Maintain a specific stock of PEoLC medicines to ensure timely supply for patients.
- Support access to PEoLC medicines both in and out of hours.
- Provide information and advice relating to the use of EoLC medicines to family members/ carers/ healthcare professionals.
- Provide flexible options for the collection or delivery of PEoLC medicines for out of hours service provision.

NEL ICB is seeking providers who will provide this service within their usual working hours.

It is also expected that the provider will be able to support out-of-hours (OOH) service provisions; defined as hours outside their normal operating times.

The provision for OOHs service would either be by participating in a rota system co-ordinated by NEL ICB across NEL or this will be delivered through a single provider. The minimum requirement (weeks per year as part of the rota) to be determined depending on the responses received from the expression of interest.

To assist the Commissioners with testing its assumptions and proposed service requirements, a market engagement feedback questionnaire has been developed to obtain understanding of the market's feedback and interest on the following:

Outline of service requirements and KPI's

- Indication on provider to participate in OOHs service provision
- timescales for procurement and mobilisation of the new contract
- proposed contract duration and financial model

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £217,158

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 85100000 - Health services

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKI4 - Inner London – East
- UKI5 - Outer London – East and North East

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

Background:

End-of-life care services requires specialist medicines that are not routinely available in all community pharmacies, and this may cause delay in treatment for patients.

Timely access to Palliative and End-of-Life Care (PEoLC) medications in the community is therefore essential for effectively managing symptoms at home for patients nearing the end of life.

Outline:

The service commissioned will provide and maintain an adequate number of strategically located providers across NEL to meet the needs of the population effectively.

Facilitate easy and timely access to PEoLC medicines, enabling patients to achieve good symptom control and maintain it consistently. To provide service provision of PEoLC medicines to patients in NEL during service provider's normal opening-hours and OOHs.

Aims:

- To ensure equitable access to the service across NEL to meet local population needs.
- Help prevent crises or emergency hospital visits, including potential admissions, caused by the lack of timely access to PEoLC medications.
- Align with the goals of the NHS Long Term Plan, the National Palliative and End-of-Life

Care Strategy, and the NEL Palliative and End-of-Life Care Strategy to enhance end-of-life care provision.

- Suppliers providing these services will be strategically located to ensure coverage across all areas within NEL.
- The provider will be required to maintain a stock of PEoLC medicines as per the agreed list developed. Services are to be provided from provider's premises that are included on NHS England's pharmaceutical list in NEL.
- NEL ICB will reimburse the pharmacy provider for the initial stock
- The Supplier must ensure robust processes are in place to monitor drug expiry and replenishment , as necessary for any stock that becomes out of date and is replaced, the provider is required to submit out-of-date submission for reimbursement. The pharmacy provider will supply a copy of the invoice for the claim if requested by NEL ICB.
- In circumstances where the Provider is unable to supply the PEoLC medicines, the Provider must direct/signpost the family member/ carer/ healthcare professional to the nearest Supplier, checking first that they have the required item(s) in stock.
- In circumstances where the Provider is unable to direct/signpost the family member/ carer/ healthcare professional to the nearest Provider due to a national supply issue, the Provider must contact the prescriber notifying them of the supply issue.

Access to the service during normal opening hours:

- The provision of this service must operate during the service provider's normal opening hours and bidder to indicate if they are willing to participate in the out-of-hours service.
- The provider shall ensure that NEL residents and healthcare professionals can contact the service during the normal opening hours.
- To maintain appropriate records to cover ordering, receipt and expiry date checks to ensure effective, ongoing service delivery.
- The provider is responsible for dispensing the items from the PEoLC stock in response to NHS prescriptions presented to the pharmacy, in line with the dispensing service.
- The Provider will have and update a specific standard operating procedure (SOP) to meet these service requirements, including a process for OOH and delivery of medicines and reflect changes in practice or guidelines where appropriate.

The option for the receipting of the prescription will follow existing pathways and these

are:

- The FP10 prescription is electronically transmitted to the Provider or
- The FP10 prescription is taken to the Provider by a family member/ carer/ healthcare professional.
- The provider will ensure that pharmacists and staff involved in the provision of the service have received the appropriate training and can deliver the service during the hours commissioned for this service if chosen to provide OOHs service provision to support service.
- The pharmacist will provide information and advice relating to the use of EoLC medicines to family members/ carers/ healthcare professionals.

Access to the service during OOHs:

- The Provider will receive referrals to access the service from various providers for residents within NEL.
- The OOH period for this service is defined as 18:00hrs - 09:00hrs (next day) and weekends and Public Holidays/ Bank- Holidays.
- The OOHS service provider will be required to provide a direct contact number (preferably a mobile number) to be contacted during the OOH period.
- To be able to dispense the medication as soon as possible and within a maximum expected time of 1 hour following the receipt of a valid prescription by the provider.

Delivery Service OOHs:

- A member of the family/ carer/ healthcare professional collects the medicine from the community pharmacies and takes the dispensed items to the patient or
- Provider to deliver medication to patient's home (this should be completed within two hours of receiving prescription) or
- A courier is arranged for the medicines to be delivered to the patient's home for medicines.
- The delivery service will only be for medicines dispensed by the Provider under the terms of the contract and will only take place OOH to residents within NEL.
- The Commissioner must be informed each month of the number of deliveries that have

been made.

- No member of the Provider's delivery personnel is required nor expected to enter the patient's home to provide the delivery service.
- The Provider will keep an accurate record of all home deliveries and shall provide this information without delay to the Authority upon reasonable request.
- All deliveries shall be made under appropriately controlled conditions to suit the nature of the products being delivered.

The indicative maximum financial envelope for this procurement will be £72,386 per annum. This indicative value is based on 36 providers in hours (9:00 hrs-18:00 hrs) of which 7 also provide out of hours (18:00 hrs - 9:00 hrs the next day, weekends and bank holidays) .This value is indicative and subject to amendment pending the responses from market engagement.

The contract will have an initial term of two years, with the possibility of extending the term up to a further 12 months beyond the initial contracted duration. This will be subject to satisfactory performance and by mutual agreement between the Commissioners and the Provider.

The awarding of this contract is subject to the Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023 (PSR). For the avoidance of doubt, the provisions of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 do not apply to this award. It is intended that awards will be made according to PSR Direct Award Process B.

Providers who wish to provide this service are asked to respond to the questionnaire which can be found at the following location:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=sITDN7CF9UeyIge0jXdO4-7GjS0BQrBBnjZmFQchC7NUNVhOTIFVM0tZODFCSzZLOTIUNKRGOE1YTy4u>

Please respond to the questionnaire by 3rd March 2025, at midday.

The Estimated date of publication of contract notice at II.3 below can be disregarded.

II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice

18 February 2025

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.3) Additional information

The NHS London Commercial Hub (LCH), hosted by NHS North East London ICB is managing this Market Engagement process on behalf of North East London Integrated Care Board.